

**Amendments to the Claims:**

1-27. (canceled)

28. (currently amended) An isolated polypeptide having at least 80% amino acid sequence identity to:

(a) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140);

(b) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140), lacking its associated signal peptide;

(c) the amino acid sequence of the extracellular domain of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140); or

(d) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide encoded by the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 203216;

wherein, the polypeptide induces ~~is capable of inducing~~ chondrocyte proliferation.

29. (currently amended) The isolated polypeptide of Claim 28 having at least 85% amino acid sequence identity to:

(a) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140);

(b) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140), lacking its associated signal peptide;

(c) the amino acid sequence of the extracellular domain of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140); or

(d) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide encoded by the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 203216;

wherein, the polypeptide induces ~~is capable of inducing~~ chondrocyte proliferation.

30. (currently amended) The isolated polypeptide of Claim 28 having at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to:

(a) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140);

(b) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140), lacking its associated signal peptide;

(c) the amino acid sequence of the extracellular domain of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140); or

(d) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide encoded by the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 203216;

wherein, the polypeptide induces ~~is capable of inducing~~ chondrocyte proliferation.

31. (currently amended) The isolated polypeptide of Claim 28 having at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to:

(a) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140);

(b) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140), lacking its associated signal peptide;

(c) the amino acid sequence of the extracellular domain of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140); or

(d) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide encoded by the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 203216;

wherein, the polypeptide induces ~~is capable of inducing~~ chondrocyte proliferation.

32. (currently amended) The isolated polypeptide of Claim 28 having at least 99% amino acid sequence identity to:

(a) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140);

(b) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140), lacking its associated signal peptide;

(c) the amino acid sequence of the extracellular domain of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140); or

(d) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide encoded by the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 203216;

wherein, the polypeptide induces ~~is capable of inducing~~ chondrocyte proliferation.

33. (previously presented) An isolated polypeptide comprising:

(a) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140);

- (b) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140), lacking its associated signal peptide;
- (c) the amino acid sequence of the extracellular domain of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140); or
- (d) the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide encoded by the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 203216.

34. (previously presented) The isolated polypeptide of Claim 33 comprising the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140).

35. (previously presented) The isolated polypeptide of Claim 33 comprising the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140), lacking its associated signal peptide.

36. (previously presented) The isolated polypeptide of Claim 33 comprising the amino acid sequence of the extracellular domain of the polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:140).

37. (canceled)

38. (previously presented) The isolated polypeptide of Claim 33 comprising the amino acid sequence of the polypeptide encoded by the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 203216.

39. (currently amended) A chimeric polypeptide comprising a polypeptide according to Claim 33 [[39]] fused to a heterologous polypeptide.

40. (currently amended) The chimeric polypeptide of Claim 28 [[50]], wherein said heterologous polypeptide is an epitope tag or an Fc region of an immunoglobulin.

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amend.